


# SATIPATTHĀNA

## as a Psychotherapy

Sharing with Bro. Billy Tan

Explore the Buddha's teachings and application of Satipaṭṭhāna ("mindfulness") from a modern & scientific perspective as a psychotherapeutic solution to reduce stress, tame emotions, and cultivate a more peaceful and happier life.



## Synopsis

Explore the Buddha's teachings from a scientific perspective:

- ⌘ Understand how emotional excitement arises, leading to stress ("*dukkha*") and distress ("*domanāsa*");
- ⌘ Paying attention and cultivating awareness ("*sati*") of bodily and mental conditions provide early warning system to the advent of stress and distress;
- ⌘ Learn to relax the body and compose the mind through four focuses of introspective attention ("*satipaṭṭhāna*");
- ⌘ Reduce stress, tame emotions, and cultivate a more peaceful and happier life.

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# Mind As An Activity

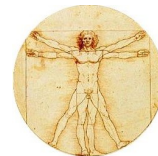


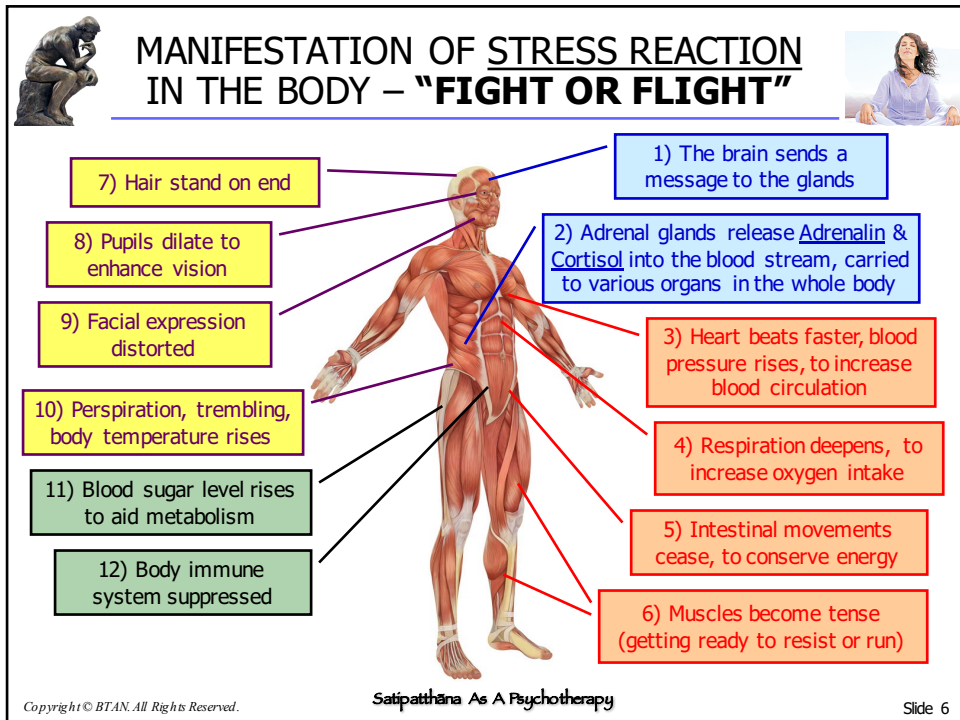
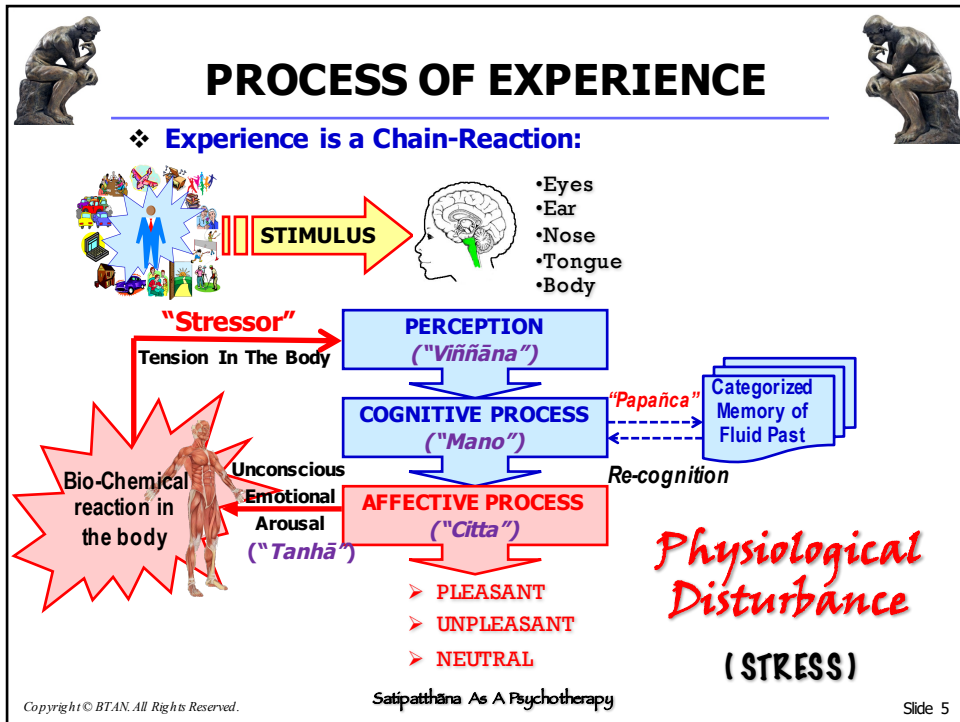
## MENTAL EXPERIENCE

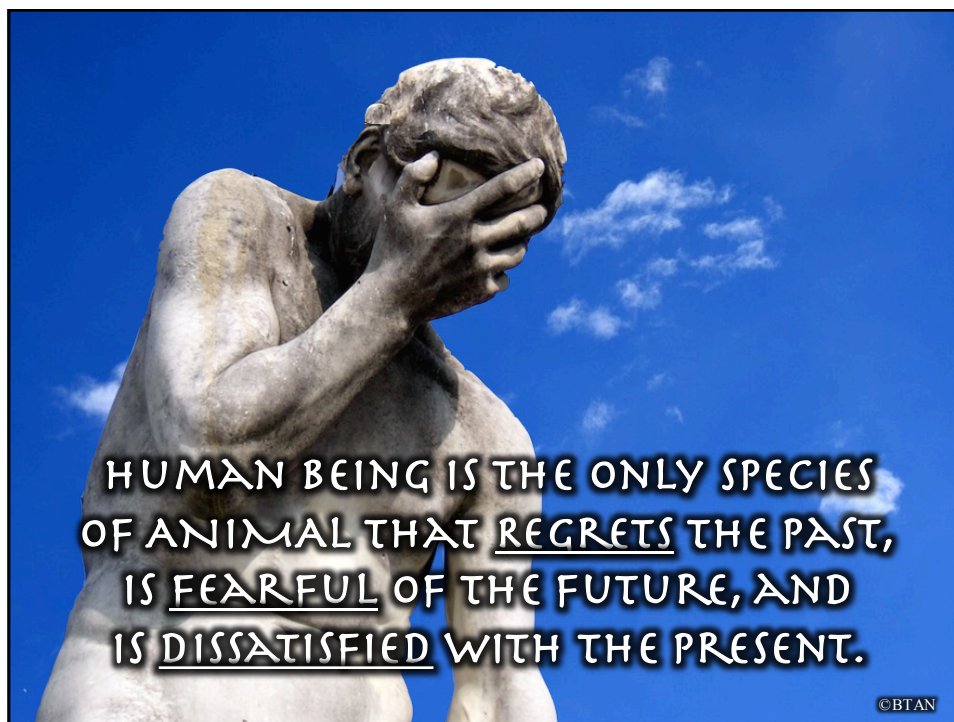
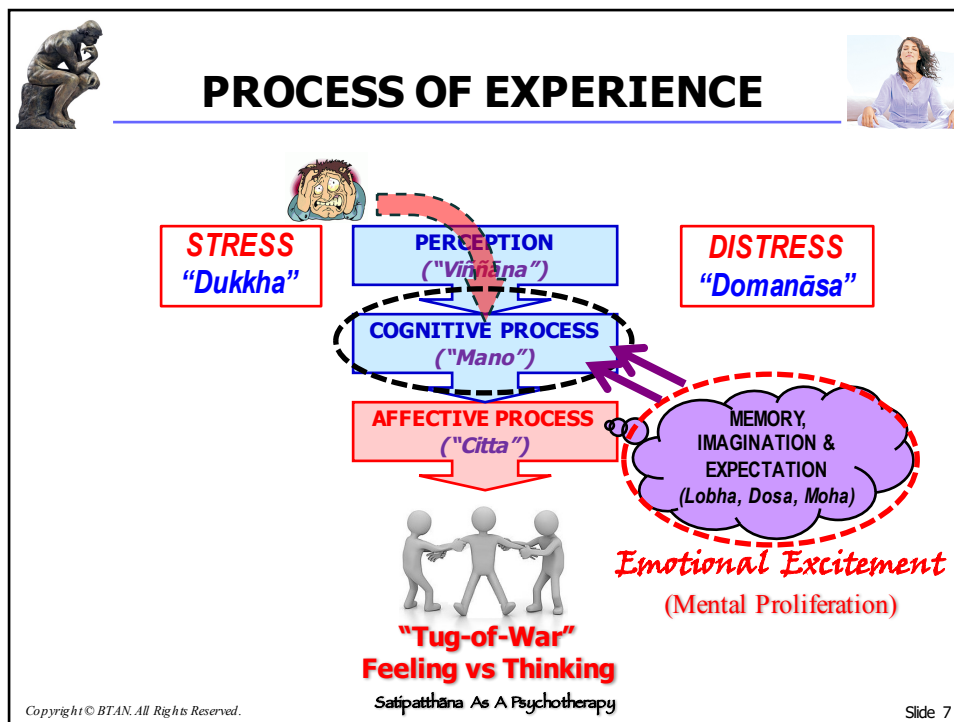


### THREE PARTS OF MENTAL EXPERIENCES:

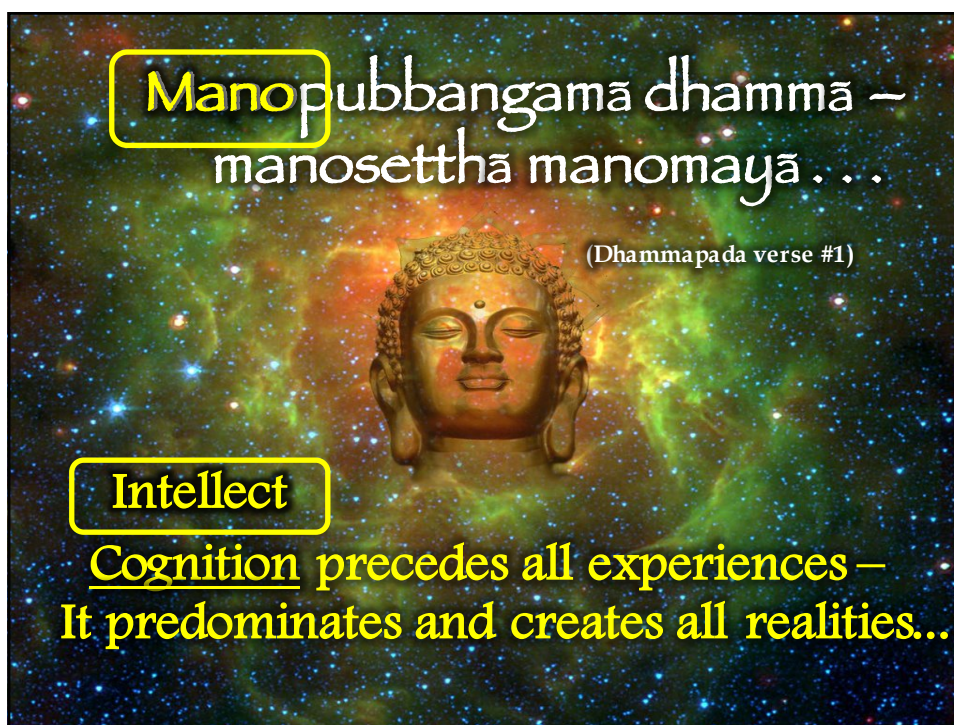
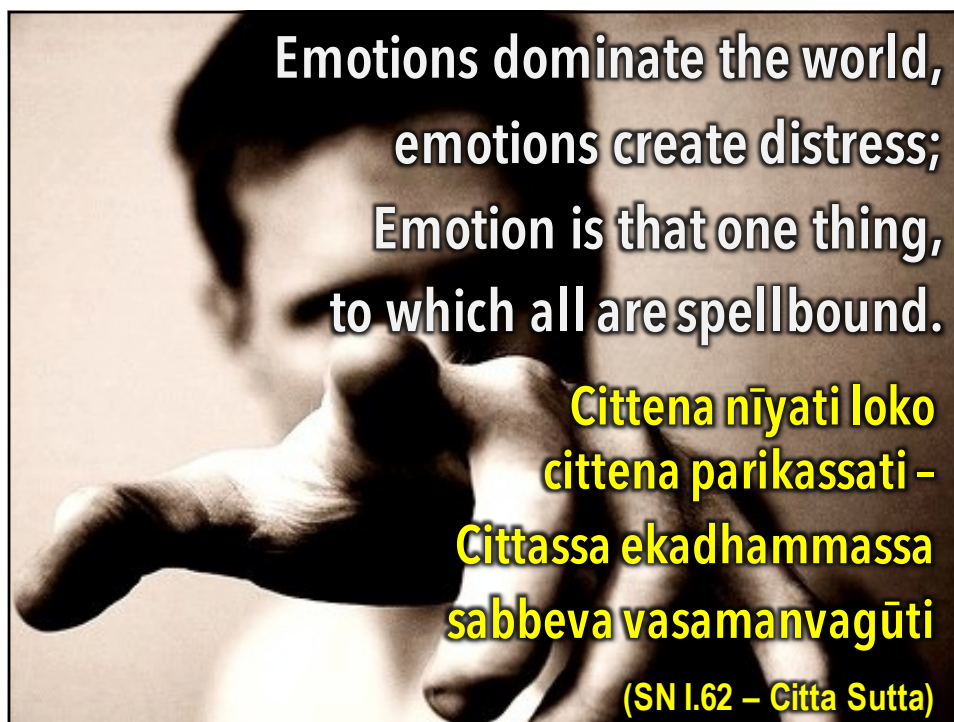
- **Viññāna** : Process of Perception ("perception")
  - what is perceived through the sense organs;
- **Mano** : Cognitive Process ("conception & intellect")
  - categorized interpretation of perception giving meaning to what was perceived;
- **Citta** : Affective Process ("emotion")
  - pleasant & unpleasant feelings arouse the emotions, leading to emotional excitement and reactions;
  - personalizing the experience with the notion there is a "self" to be affected.











## PROCESS OF EXPERIENCE

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

The diagram illustrates a chain reaction starting with **STRESS "Dukkha"** (represented by a red box and a cartoon of a distressed face). This leads to **PERCEPTION ("Viñāṇa")** (blue box), which then leads to **COGNITIVE PROCESS ("Mano")** (blue box with a dashed border), and finally to **AFFECTIVE PROCESS ("Cāra")** (red box). A large red arrow points downwards through these stages. To the right, a green box titled "Be conscious of bodily conditions:" lists several physical indicators: Heart rate, Breathing, Jaw, teeth, tongue, Facial expression, Vocal expression, Fist & arm tension, Neck & shoulders, Upper/lower back, and Body temperature.

**STRESS "Dukkha"**

**PERCEPTION ("Viñāṇa")**

**COGNITIVE PROCESS ("Mano")**

**AFFECTIVE PROCESS ("Cāra")**

**Be conscious of bodily conditions:**

- Heart rate
- Breathing
- Jaw, teeth, tongue
- Facial expression
- Vocal expression
- Fist & arm tension
- Neck & shoulders
- Upper/lower back
- Body temperature

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## PROCESS OF EXPERIENCE

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

This diagram is identical to the one on Slide 11, showing the chain reaction from stress to perception, cognitive process, and affective process. However, it includes a red circle with a white hand icon pointing upwards, and the text **Pause, Relax, & T.H.I.N.K.** in red below it, suggesting a point of intervention in the process.

**PERCEPTION ("Viñāṇa")**

**COGNITIVE PROCESS ("Mano")**

**AFFECTIVE PROCESS ("Cāra")**

**Pause, Relax, & T.H.I.N.K.**

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## 3-STEP SELF-COMPASSION

 ❖ **PAUSE**  
(allow time for emotional excitement & anxiety to calm down and hormonal reactions to subside)

 ❖ **RELAX**  
(take deep breaths, relax the body, and consciously compose the mind to respond)

 ❖ **T.H.I.N.K.**  
(purposefully focus on wholesome & beneficial response to the problem)

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## FREEDOM FROM MENTAL PROLIFERATION


1. RELAX THE BODY: *Conscious Relaxation*
  - Bio-chemical activities gradually subside;
  - Tension in the body eases;
  - Mind no longer disturbed by tension in the body.

*A relaxed body is a necessary condition for a calm mind!*
2. CALM THE MIND: *Introspective Attention*
  - Relaxed body suggests absence of threats;
  - Repetitive, flowing, or rhythmic activity;
  - Conscious focused attention on the present moment;
  - No mental proliferation – mind calms down;
  - No further arousal of bio-chemical reactions.

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## BENEFITS OF BREATHING



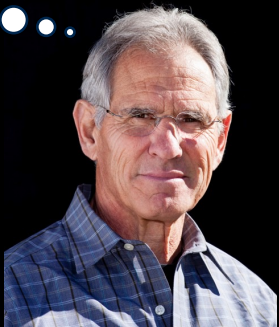


**Most critically overlooked relaxation tool!**

**The fastest way to relax the body & calm the mind.**

- a) Increases natural unforced oxygen intake (food for cells!);
- b) Stabilizes heart rate and blood pressure;
- c) Regulates body temperature and blood circulation;
- d) Restores and maintains homeostasis (stability);
- e) Calms the Amygdala, fear control center in the brain, by indicating the absence of threats.

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# SATIPATṬHĀNA as a Psychotherapy







**“SATIPAṬṬHĀNA”**  
**Introspection**

- ✧ **sati = attention**
- ✧ **upa = within**
- ✧ **thāna = to place**

**To place attention within**





**MN10: Satipatthāna Sutta**



Buddha: “Monks, this is the **direct way** (*ekāyano...maggo*) for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the extinguishing of suffering and grief, for the attainment and the realization of Nibbāna — this direct way is the four focuses of introspection.”

[MN10: Satipatthāna Sutta – The Foundations of Mindfulness](#)

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## MN10: Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta

Modern and practical definition of **Satipaṭṭhāna:**  
( Four Focuses of Introspection )

“What are the four?  
Here, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu abides contemplating  
...**body** (*kāya*) as a body,  
...**feeling** (*vedanā*) as feeling,  
...**emotional state** (*citta*) as emotional state,  
...**conception** (*dhamma*) as conception,  
ardent, fully aware, **with introspective attention**,  
having put away covetousness and grief for the world.”

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## INTROSPECTION “Satipaṭṭhāna”

### FOUR FOCUSES OF INSTROSPECTION

- ① **BODY** (*Kāyānupassanā*): Observe the physical manifestation of the reactions in the body;
- ② **FEELING** (*Vedanānupassanā*): Observe the manifestation of feeling of sensations in the body (pleasant, unpleasant);
- ③ **AFFECTION** (*Cittānupassanā*): Observe the manifestation of emotional excitement and arousal of emotional states;
- ④ **CONCEPTION** (*Dhammānupassanā*): Observe manifestation of thoughts and concepts, the interpretation of circumstances past, present, and future.

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## OBSERVE THE BODY

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

**"Stress"**  
**"Stressor"**  
 Tension In The Body

**PERCEPTION**  
 ("Viññāna")

**COGNITIVE PROCESS**  
 ("Mano")

**AFFECTIVE PROCESS**  
 ("Citta")

**BODY**  
 (Kāyānupassanā)  
 Observe the physical manifestation of the reaction in the body, as disturbances or reactions in the body

**Physiological Disturbance**  
**(STRESS)**  
 "Fight or Flight"

**AUTONOMIC Bio-Chemical Reaction of the Organism**  
 Unconscious Emotional Arousal

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## OBSERVE THE FEELING

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

**STRESS**  
 "Dukkha"

**PERCEPTION**  
 ("Viññāna")

**COGNITIVE PROCESS**  
 ("Mano")

**AFFECTIVE PROCESS**  
 ("Citta")

**FEELING**  
 (Vedanānupassanā)  
 Observe the manifestation of feelings of sensations in the body (pleasant, unpleasant), in terms of pain, pleasure, agitation, calm, discomfort, comfort;

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## OBSERVE THE AFFECTION

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

STRESS  
"Dukkha"

PERCEPTION  
("Vināna")

DISTRESS  
"Domanāsa"

COGNITIVE PROCESS  
("Mano")

AFFECTIVE PROCESS  
("Citta")

**AFFECTION**  
 (Cittānupassanā)  
 Observe the manifestation of emotional excitement and arousal of emotional states such as fear, anger, anxiety, lust, hatred, grief, sorrow, despair, etc.

MEMORY,  
 IMAGINATION &  
 EXPECTATION  
 (Lobha, Dosa, Moha)  
*Emotional Excitement*  
 (Mental Proliferation)

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## OBSERVE THE CONCEPTION

❖ Experience is a Chain-Reaction:

PERCEPTION  
("Vināna")


COGNITIVE PROCESS  
("Mano")

AFFECTIVE PROCESS  
("Citta")


**CONCEPTION**  
 (Dhammānupassanā)  
 Observe the manifestation of thoughts and concepts, the interpretation of circumstances past, present, and future

MEMORY,  
 IMAGINATION &  
 EXPECTATION  
 (Lobha, Dosa, Moha)

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## INTROSPECTION "Satipaṭṭhāna"



### FOUR FOCUSES OF INSTROSPECTION

- ① **BODY** (*Kāyānupassanā*): Observe the physical manifestation of the reaction in the body, as disturbance or reactions in the body;
- ② **FEELING** (*VEDANĀnupassanā*): Observe the manifestation as feelings in the body (pleasant/unpleasant), in terms of tension, pain, pleasure, agitation, discomfort, various bodily sensations & feelings;
- ③ **AFFECTION** (*Cittānupassanā*): Observe the manifestation in the form of emotional excitements, or calmness of temperment, and what emotional states are aroused in terms of anger, fear, panic, anxiety, frustration, lust, hatred, grief, sorrow, despair;
- ④ **COGNITION** (*Dhammānupassanā*): Observe manifestation of thoughts in the mind, which are interpretations of circumstances past, present, and future.

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## T.H.I.N.K. before you act or speak

 T	<b>Is it Truthful</b>	
H	<b>Is this Helpful</b>	
I	<b>Will it Improve the situation</b>	
 N	<b>Is this really Necessary</b>	
K	<b>Is it a Kind act or speech</b>	

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